

A
TREATISE
TOUCHING
FALLING
FROM
GRACE.

L O N D O N:

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TO THE
READER.

Courteous Reader,

TH^O *this Treatise be but Short, yet I Presume, if the Matter therein Contain'd be duly Weighed, and Considered, it will be found very Useful. 'Tis Injurious to the Practice of Religion, to Indulge our Selves with a fond Conceit of our being the Elect of God, and that it is Impossible for us ever to be otherwise, do what we will. This strikes at the Root of all Christian Duties, and at once Rocks the Spiritual Building; for what Evils may we not indulge our selves in and what Duties may we not neglect, if the Omitting the One, or Performing the other, will not separate us from, or make us the more Capable of the Divine Favour.*

Let Your Mind be seriously Engaged in the Perusing of this Treatise. Weigh it well, Take it not upon Trust, but carry it to the Touchstone that will tell whether it be Gold or no. And if you find it speaks according to the Law, and the Testament, then do not reject it;
for

for Whoso despiseth the Word shall be Destroyed, but he that feareth the Commandment shall be Rewarded. Prov. 13. 13.

I Earnestly Pray that what is herein contained may tend to make the Professors of Religion more careful, and circumspect, and more Diligent in the performing of their Christian Duties. And if any Comfort or Advantage is received by You in the Reading of this Discourse, let God have the Praise, and let him have your Prayers who is

Y O U R

Soul's Well Wisher,

JOSEPH JENKIN

28 SE60



TREATISE

TOUCHING

Falling from GRACE.

OR,

*Thirteen Arguments, tending to
prove, That Believers cannot
fall from Grace; Examined
and Answered.*

THE POSITION which the Thir-
teen following Arguments are brought to
maintain, is this, viz. That Justified
Persons cannot Totally, nor Finally, Fall
from the Grace of Union with the Lord Jesus.

The First Argument brought to support this Position, is taken from the Words of our Lord, Mat. 24. and is stated as follows:

If any could prevail upon the Elect, it is like they
might be false Prophets that might do it.
But they cannot seduce them.
Therefore much less can any totally draw them away:

A a

To

Answer. To this I answer: First, We must consider That the Lord Jesus speaks in the former part
 Mat. 24. 3. this Chapter, touching the *Signs of his Coming* it being desired of him by his Disciples. And our Lord, as an Introduction to his Answer gives this Charge, viz. That they take heed that none deceive them. Whereby it seems that his Disciples might be deceived, and that by Men too or else this Caveat of our Lord's had been altogether needless. The Reason why they must take heed is, because many false Prophets shall arise and deceive many.

V. 11. What! must the Disciples of Christ take heed
 V. 13. They who are Justified Persons, or else be liable to be deceived? Yea, they must; for they only that endure to the End shall be saved. It seems it is not impossible for False Prophets to Deceive Justified Persons, as appears in this Chapter, and also
 2 Pet. 1, 2, 3. by what St. Peter says. But there were False Prophets also among the People, even as there shall be False Teachers also among you, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious Ways by whom the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of. And through Covetousness, shall they with feigned Words, make Merchandize of you. Of whom
 Chap. 1. 1. Why, of Justified Persons; such as had Obtained like precious Faith, through the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Again, St. Paul exhorts the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, to take heed unto themselves
 Acts. 20. 28 and unto all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost made them Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased, with his own Blood. The Reason why St. Paul gives this Charge to the Elders, is, because he knows, that after his Departure, Grievous Wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the Flock. Also of your own selves, says he, shall Men

V. 29.

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Men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them: Therefore they must Watch; or else they may be deceived or drawn away.

Besides, Our Lord Warns us to beware of False Prophets. And St. Peter exhorts those who have obtained like precious Faith, to be very careful how they behave themselves; at least, as he adds, To also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own Steadfastness. Mat. 7. 15.
2 Pet. 1. 1.
Ch. 3. 17.

I presume it will not be denied by any, but readily owned by all, that the Persons here spoken of, who had obtained this precious Faith, were in a Justified State and Condition. And yet it is easie to discern, from the Counsel given them, that there was a Possibility of their being deceived by false Prophets; And so falling from that Faith, in which they had obtained a Share with other Saints. Else, how useless were these Sayings of Christ and his Servants, and to what Purpose should we be exhorted to go forward, with a Promised Reward, and a Threatened Punishment, if it were impossible for us to go back.

But I shall consider the Argument more particularly. And here I shall

First, Enquire who is intended by the Elect.

Secondly, What is the Import of the Phrase if it were possible.

First, I am to Enquire who the Word Elect has respect to. And if this has respect to such an one as St. Paul, who could say he had Fought a good Fight, and finished his Course, and had kept the Faith, then it must be allowed, that it is not possible for such a Person to Fall: But if by the Elect be meant such an one as St. Paul in his Warfare, then we must allow that such may Fall;

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For altho' St. Paul could say, when he had finished his Course, that there was a Crown in reserve for him, yet while he was in his Warfare, he was engaged to take care, *least while he preach'd to others he himself should become a cast away.* But the Word *Elect* is diversly applied in the Scripture A^s,

1. Such that *keep the Faith* are called the *Elect* who shall not be deceived by *false Prophets* and *false Christs*, altho' they should come with a *Deceivableness of Unrighteousness* in them that Perish. For those that do Wickedly against the Covenant, shall be Corrupt with Flatteries, yet the People that know their God shall be Strong and do Exploits; and such who give diligence make their Calling and Election Sure, will be preserved from Falling.

2. By the word *Elect*, is sometimes meant *Israel after the Flesh*; for they are called the *Chosen of God*. Yet notwithstanding, by reason of Unbelief they forfeited their Interest in the Favour of God. They were cut off, says the Apostle; yet God is able to graft them into the Stock again, and in his due time he will, and then shall they return and be deceived no more.

3. By the *Elect* is sometimes meant *Jesus Christ*. Behold (saith God) my Servant, mine *Elect*, in whom my Soul delighteth, he is the *Elect Precious*, I shall not fail nor be discouraged.

Now if by the *Elect* be meant such as *keep the Faith*, as *Israel* in their return, or *Christ*, it must be allowed impossible to deceive them: But then they cannot be brought into an Argument for all Believers, while in their warfaring State and Condition.

Secondly, I shall now consider the Sense of the Phrase, *If it were possible*. Now that these Words do not Argue the Perseverance of Believers

the End, and that it is impossible they should fall away, is evident, if we Consider,

1. Because our Lord Exhorts his Disciples to use the greatest Caution they could, that so they might not be deceived: Now is it suitable to the Wisdom of our Lord to Exhort Christians to use so great Caution and Diligence, lest they should be Deceived by false Teachers, and at the same assure them it was utterly Impossible, they should be Deceived?

Mark 13.

33.

2. In the same Chapter our Lord Exhorts them to see to it, to watch, and Pray, that you may not be found Sleeping: Which plainly Argues they might Sleep, and so be rendred incapable to stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 21.

34. 36.

3. Our Lord Declares, that by reason of the extream Affliction of those times, many should be Offended, i. e. shall fall from the Faith. And because Iniquity shall abound, the Love of many will wax cold.

Act 20.

4. Besides, the Phrase, *If it be possible*, or *if it may be*, doth not denote an Absolute Impossibility, but a great Difficulty in the performance of an Act. St. Paul hastned, *if it were possible*, for him to be at Jerusalem before Pentecost. *If it be possible* says the Apostle, *as much as in you lieth have Peace with all Men.*

Rom. 12.

18.

5. This Phrase doth not denote what the Event will be on the Elect, but the earnest Endeavours, and vehement Onsets, of the False Teachers, so that they will do the utmost they can, that *if possible* they may shock the Christians Faith.

But I shall proceed to the next Argument, which is taken from the unchangeable Love of God to his People, Isa. 54. 17. Jer. 31. 1.

Argument Though there is Unconstancy in the Creature, yet
 2. in the first of Pet. 1. 5. We are kept by the Power of
 God; and least that keeping should be for a little
 while, he tells you it is an Inheritance that fadeth
 not away. Rom. 8. 30.

Answer The Strength of this Argument lieth in Two
 Particulars.

First, In God's Unchangeableness.

Secondly, In the Believers being kept by his Power.

First, As to the Unchangeableness of God, I
 grant that he *changes* not, and yet it doth not
 follow, but Justified Persons may fall Totally and
 Finally. For,

Union and Salvation are Conditional. And this
 appears, if we consider,

1. That the Entrance into both are Conditional;
 Mark 16. He that Believeth and is Baptized, shall be Saved,
 16. being Justified by Faith, &c. For without Faith it is
 Rom. 5. 1. impossible to please God. Now if Justified by Faith,
 Heb. 11. 6. then to be sure, not without it. For the Apostle
 John 3. says, He that Believeth not is Condemned.
 18.

Objection But, Some may say, we are Justified before in
 God's Account.

Reply To which I make Reply, Then were we also his
 People, in his Account without, or before Believing;
 which to say were to contradict Scripture, which
 informs us that they which in time past were not a
 1 Pet. 2. People, yet are now the People of God, which had not
 10. obtained Mercy, have now obtained Mercy. The
 Rom. 9. Apostle Paul saith, that Andronicus and Junia,
 25. 26. were in Christ before him. The Apostle John
 Hos. 2. 23. saith, if we say we have Fellowship with him,
 Rom. 16. 7. 1 Joh. 1. 6.

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and walk in *Darkness*, we lye, and do not see the *Truth*. And again, he that saith he knoweth him, and keepeth not his *Commandments*, is a *Liar*, and the *Truth* is not in him. By all which it appears, that we are not the *Justified Ones*, neither have we *Union* with *Christ*, without *Believing*, and doing his *Commandments*. 1 John 2. 4.
Ch. 1. 7.

2. We are Continued in *Union* with *Christ*, on condition of *Believing* and *Persevering* in doing the *Will of God*, and not without. This the *Word of God* doth plainly teach us in many places. For we are made partakers of *Christ*: [Mark] if we hold fast the beginning of our *Confidence*, stedfast to the End. And the *Apostle* saith to the *Colossians*, that *Christ* hath reconciled them in the *Body of his Flesh*, through *Death*, to present them *Holy*, and *Unblamable*, and *Unreproveable*, in his sight. If they continue in the *Faith*, Grounded and Settled, and be not moved away from the *Hope of the Gospel*, which they have heard. Mark, they shall be presented *Holy*, *Unblamable*, *Unreprovable*, if they Continue, &c. And so saith the *Spirit* to the *Angel of the Church of Smirna*. *Bethou faithful unto Death*, and I will give thee a *Crown of Life*. And again elsewhere, *He that overcometh*, and keepeth my *Words* unto the End, the same shall be *Clothed in White Raiment*, and I will not blot his *Name* out of the *Book of Life*, but I will confess his *Name* before my *Father*, and before his *Holy Angels*. Heb. 3. 14.
Col. 1. 21,
22,
23.
Rev. 2. 10.

Our Lord *Christ* saith, that every *Branch* in him which beareth not *Fruit*, he taketh away. By which we may see that some *Branches* in *Christ* may become *Fruitless*, and so will be taken away by the *Father*. So the *Author* to the *Hebrews*, saith, That which beareth *Thorns* and *Briars*, is rejected, and nigh unto *Cursing*. John 15. 2.
Heb. 6. 8.

By what hath been said, it appears, that we have no *Union* with *Christ*, but by *Believing*, and doing

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doing the Will of God: And that Union with Christ so attained, is Continued, by Persevering in doing the will of God, and not otherwise: God having promised Eternal Life upon no other Terms. This being Considered, we may plainly see that altho' Persons which have Union with Christ may fall from it by not holding fast unto the End, yet God is never the more Changeable, because Justification, Union and Salvation, are Conditional, as hath been shewed. God hath bound himself (if I may use that Expression) to give Life to Overcoming Saints; but if any Man draw back, his Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. He hath promised his Blessing unto Fruitful Branches in Christ; but Barren Ones he will take away.

Heb. 10.
58.

So much to the Argument, now to the Scriptures Alledged.

The first is *Isaiah 54. 17.* And the Supposed Strength which is in this Text lies in these Words, *No Weapon formed against them shall Prosper.*

Let us now Examine, who it shall not Prosper against, Why saith the Lord, *This is the Heritage of the Lord's Servants*: Now the *Lord's Servants* are they that still Overcome, against whom no Weapon shall Prosper: Not they that Fight for a Time, and are Overcome at last. Let not him that Girdeth on his Armour, boast himself, as he that putteth it off. In serving the Lord, we have a Promise, as 1 Pet. 3 the Apostle saith, *Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is Good?* So that this doth not Prove, but that Believers may fall, and so Cease to be what they were. And God is not Engaged in Promise unto them. For he saith, *When the Righteous Man turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity, and doth according to all the Abomination that the Wicked Man doth, shall he Live?* All his Righteousness that he hath done shall

1 King 20.
31.

1 Pet. 3
13.

Ezek. 18.
24.

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shall not be mention'd : In his Trespasse that he hath Transgressed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall Die, &c.

Again, This is a Promise made unto Israel, of and concerning their being Established in Righteousness, after their Scattering and Rejection, for their not receiving Christ; for it relates to God's performing Covenant with them, in which Covenant they shall all be Taught of God. And all thy Children shall be Taught of the Lord, and great shall be the Peace of thy Children. (But not a Promise made to any in the Time of their Warfare, without the Condition of standing fast, taking heed, Overcoming and the like; for otherwise there are Weapons, viz. the Fiery Darts of Satan, &c. which may, and do prosper against many, and we have no Promise to the Contrary) which proves that God, one Day will look upon Israel, though now Tossed and Afflicted, and turn Ungodliness from Jacob: In which Day, or at which Time, no Weapon formed against him shall Prosper: For the Lord will assuredly Establish Israel, a People before him; therefore this Text doth not so much as seem to Prove the thing for which it is brought.

The Second Place Alledged, is Psal. 125. 1. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, that cannot be moved, but abideth for ever, &c.

I Grant, as before, that Persons who Trust in the Lord, shall be (as Mount Sion) immovable, so long as they continue Trusting in him: But some that Trust in the Lord, may let go their Confidence, as hath been shewed: Yea, some have so done. Thus saith the Lord, What Iniquity have your Fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after Vanity, and are become Vain? Be Astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; Be ye very Desolate, saith the Lord. For my People have committed two Evils;

Jer. 2. 5.

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Evils; They have forsaken me the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that will hold no Water, &c.

The Last Place is *Jer 31. 1.* The Strength of which Place lies in these Words. *I will be a God of all the Families of Israel; and they shall be my People.*

We must have Respect in this Place to Two Things.

First, To the Persons, which were Israel:

Secondly, To the Time when the Lord will be their God. And that is, after those Days; or the Days coming. v. 27. 31. Which is the Time God will make a Covenant with Israel.

In the Performance of which Covenant, God will *Establish Israel in Righteousness*, although now they are separated from him: They are *Branches cut off*, but they shall be *Grafted in again* and then shall they be his People, and he will be their God; and he will make an *Everlasting Covenant with them*, that he will never turn away from them to do them Good; but he will put his Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from him.

And let not any say, that although it be not yet performed to Israel, nevertheless it is performed to Believers.

For if it be so, then Believers may not Teach every Man his Neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for the Covenant saith, they shall not Teach them after those Days; so They shall not Depart from him after those Days; for then he will Write his Law in their Hearts, and they shall all know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest of them. Moreover, Believers may now fall; and the Spirit hath likewise Expressly said, that in the latter Days, Men shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing

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ducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils; but then they shall not, and therefore the Days there spoken of, are not yet come.

Thus the Scriptures, here alledged, are Answered: Or, rather the supposed Strength in them, tending to the Proof of the Affirmation, is taken away and removed.

The Second Thing is, God's keeping Justified Persons by his Power. And the Scriptures alledged for Proof, are 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Unto the Place in St. Peter's Epistle, I thus Answer. The Apostle takes an Occasion to Bless God, for his abundant Mercy, by which they were begotten again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead. In the fourth Verse he tells them whereto they were begotten, viz. To an Inheritance, Incorruptable, and Unde-
fled, that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens, for you. Who are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation. Here are two Things Considerable,

1. The Inheritance, which is for those who are kept by the Power of God.

2 The Power by which God keepeth or begetteth; Which is not a forcible or compulsive Power, as some suppose, but the powerful means that he useth as to both. Therefore the Apostle saith, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the Power of God to Salvation, to every one that Believeth. Rom. 1. 16.

So that as the Word or Gospel is the Powerful Means, by which we are begotten to a lively Hope, so likewise it is the Powerful Means, by which they who are begotten, are kept: And therefore are said to be kept by his Power: For it is the Word by which they must grow. As New-born Babes desire the sincere Milk thereof, that ye may grow thereby. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

Thus

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Thus you may see what it is by which we are kept, viz. By his Word. It is God's Power, or Powerful Means, by which he keeps those which are kept. Now there is an Inheritance reserved in the Heavens for them that are kept by this Word, (or Power) and do not turn from his Commandments, as some do: For *whoso despiseth the Word shall be destroyed.*

Those who despise the Word, despise the Power of God, as hath been shewed already; and therefore it is through Faith, that this Power keeps us, as St. Peter saith: But some do not mix the Word with Faith, and so are not kept by the Power of God. For it is through Faith, and not without Faith, &c. Now those who fall from the Faith, (as it hath been shewed that some do) are not kept by the Power of God.

The Third Argument is, That

Argument.

3.

The same Persons that are predestinated, the same are called, they that are called, the same are justified, the same that are justified, the same are Glorified, therefore called Persons cannot fall away, because they shall be Glorified.

Answer.

For Answer to this Argument, Let us first consider the Text with the Coherence, Rom. 8. 30. In the 29th Verse the Spirit of God saith, *Whom he did Foreknow, he also did Predestinate, to be Conformed to the Image of his Son, &c.* In which take Notice of Two Things.

First, God's Fore-knowledge. And

Secondly, What those who are Fore-known, are Predestinated unto.

Sure, no Man, nor any thing can be hid from his Eyes. Yet shall we then conclude that all Men are Predestinated? No. But rather that God did Fore-know some Men in Christ, by, or through Faith, and Obedience.

1 Pet. 1. 2.

2 Thes. 2.

13.

Obedience. And these which are so *Known*, or *Fore-known*, in *Christ*, *Believing*, he doth approve of; For so it is

First, as to God's *Fore-knowledge*. If this be Examined, it makes nothing for the Defence of the Argument for which it is Urged. That God does know all Persons and Things, is an undoubted Truth; for there is nothing can be concealed from him: But 'tis a most unconcluding Way of Arguing, to say, because God knows who will be Saved, that therefore 'tis impossible for one who is a Believer now, to be otherwise in Time to come.

If *Predestination* to *Eternal Glory* is thus Argued, from the *Prescience* of God, We may as well Argue the *Salvation* of all Men from the same Topic, and conclude, that because he knew all, therefore none should Perish.

The Plain Meaning of the *Apostle* seems to be this, that God did *Fore-know* some Men in *Christ*, i.e. by *Faith*, and *Sincere Obedience*: And these Persons which he so knew, he approves of: For so is the *Knowledge* of God to be understood.

Further, *Christ* at the *Last Day*, is said not to know some Persons. Not that he is properly Ignorant of them; but he doth not so know them, as to approve of their Actions. Therefore he saith *Depart from me*. By this we may see who those are that God *Fore-knows*: They are Believers, *Workers* of *Righteousness*; And those whom he doth not know, are *Workers* of *Iniquity*.

Secondly, We are to take notice of what these Persons *Fore-known* are *Predestinated* unto. Says the *Apostle*, whom he did *Fore-know*, them he did *Predestinate*; moreover, whom he did *Predestinate*, them he also Called, to be *Conformable* to the *Image* of his Son. This seems to have a special Regard unto the *Apostles*, or *First Ministers* of the *Gospel*, whom
God

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God Fore-knew would be Faithful, and therefore were chosen, and set apart by him, to Preach the Gospel of Christ to the World; and in so doing, they were made conformable to the Image of Christ, by the great Sufferings they underwent; For of them it might truly be said, *For thy Sake we are Killed all the Day long.* Because they were Treated with an unbecoming Rudeness, and accompted as the filth of the World, and as the Off-scouring of all things. And unto them in a Particular Manner it was given for the Sake of Christ, that they should not only Believe in his Name, but also they should Suffer for his Sake.

But if this must have Respect to all Believers, the Meaning of it is explained by the Apostle Peter; For, says he, *As he that hath called You is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation.* And again, *I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord, Beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.* For God hath not called us unto Uncleanness, but to Holiness:

But, saith the Argument, called Persons cannot fall away, because they shall be Glorified.

Sure, this Conclusion is too large, If by called Persons, be meant All called Persons: For the
 Mat. 22. Lord Christ saith, *Many are called, but few chosen.*
 24.

Some that are called come short of Glory, for want of walking worthy of their calling; for some turn the Grace of God into Wantonness; And some that are Righteous, or Justified, may be Condemned, Ez-k. 18. for their Non-Continuance in the Works of Righteousness. And therefore All that are called, are
 24.
 2 Pet. 2. not Glorified: But such only, who by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour,
 21.
 Rom. 2. 7. and Immortality. So much for that Argument.
 Now for the Fourth.

Which

Which is Grounded upon John 4. 14. But who so-
ever Drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, 4.
shall never Thirst; But the Water that I shall give
him, shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up into
Everlasting Life. From hence some Persons Ar-
gue, That Grace will always be springing in the Be-
lieving Soul, and therefore 'tis Impossible for him to
fall away.

How little this is to the Purpose, may easily
be seen: For our Controversy is not whether the
Fountain may be Dried up, or no; but whether
Believers may not fall away from their Fountain:
Unless by Inverting the Order, it be Concluded
that the Believers are the Fountain, which can-
not be Granted. Seeing Christ is that Fountain
spoke of by the Prophets, My People, saith the
Lord, have committed two great Evils, they have
forsaken me the Fountain of Living Water, &c.

Jer. 2. 13.
Zach. 13. 1.

The Intent of our Lord in the Words on
which the Argument is Grounded, seems to be
this; Namely, That such Believers who are contin-
ually Drinking of the Spirit, will always have the
Gifts and Graces thereof Springing up in them. By
which it appears that there must be a continual
Exercise of Faith in our Souls, or otherwise, we
shall Prove but as Dry Wells.

But the Fountain Striveth to maintain the Streams, Objection.
therefore they cannot be Dried up.

It is true the Fountain, (which is Christ) doth
Strive to maintain the Streams; but yet he saith,
His Spirit shall not always Strive with Man. And
that Men may forsake the Fountain of Living
Water, is plainly Intimated by the Prophet,
when he saith, If ye forsake him, he will forsake
you. And again, All they that Forsake thee shall
be

Gen. 6. 3.
2 Chr. 14.
2.

be Ashamed. From whence it is plain, that if Believers are to be looked upon as Wells, they may become Dry by For saking the Fountain. And thus this Argument is Confuted.

Argument
3.

The Fifth Argument is taken from the Prayer of our Lord, *John 17. 15.* Where he Prays, *that his Father would keep them.* And was heard in the Prayer that he made. Therefore, &c.

Answer.

The Strength of this Argument lieth in our Lord's being heard in his Prayer, which is Granted to be true; yet I Deny that Believers cannot fall totally for this Reason.

1. Because Christ in this Prayer (as also in the Pattern given to his Apostles) resigns himself and his Desires to the Will of his Father, and does not Pray, that what he Petitions for, may be granted with a *Non Obstante*. As in the Case of his Praying in the Garden, the Night wherein he was Betrayed, When he Petitioned, *that the Cup might pass from him.* Where he says, *nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt:* Now if we should conclude that his Prayer was Positive (as the aforesaid Argument supposes it to be,) then we must likewise conclude, that he was not heard, for the Cup did not pass from him; but praying with Respect, and Submission to his Father's Will, he was heard inasmuch as the Will of God concerning him was accomplished.

John 17.
21, 23.

2. Christ Prayed for the World, that *they might know him:* Now if Christ's Prayer had been absolute, without respect to this or that, then they must know him, and believe in him, which to do is *Life Eternal.* Christ therefore in his Prayer had respect to the Means, by which they should come to *know him*, which if the Means were

v. 3.

were used by them, the end might be affected in them; for the means were of this tendance, and every way correspondent, as to the bringing them, even all the World, to the Knowledge of Christ: In which Christ was heard: For such means God hath afforded the World, that would accomplish the end, did they not put it from them.

3. Christ prayed that *the Jews who Crucified him* Luke 23.
should be forgiven. 24.

Now, If Christ here had been absolute and positive, viz. That it must be so without respect to this or that, then it should have been so; viz. They should be forgiven, and then they could not have been cut off, for not receiving Christ; because their sin was forgiven: Christ therefore in this Prayer must be understood to have respect to the way, in which forgiveness was promised unto them, viz. Repentance, Faith and Baptism; in doing of which, they, to wit, so many as did Repent of *Acts 2.38.* their shedding Christ innocent Blood, and were accordingly Baptized, did receive Forgiveness, as he had prayed they should; but as for the rest, all the Blood that was shed upon the Earth, from the Blood of righteous Abel, unto the Blood of *Zacharias* shall be upon them, yea, and the innocent *Mas. 23.* Blood of Christ also, which they desired might be on them and their Children.

Now to come close to the Argument, Christ ch. 27.
Prayeth for his Disciples, that they should be 25.
kept from the evil of the World, in which he is heard. I grant, considering his Prayer, (as before) to have respect to their abiding in him, by keeping his Commandments; for, he saith, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that shall abide with you for ever.* Christ in this Prayer therefore is not absolute. That is to say, They are my Disciples, thou hast given them me, and

now I pray thee to keep them, although they do not keep my Commandments; But this Prayer is with respect to their abiding in him, which if they do (as some have not done that were in him, they have the benefit of his Prayer; but if otherwise, they have no benefit thereof, no more than they that do never believe in him, have the benefit of his intercession: but are cut off as unfruitful branches from the Vine: Therefore notwithstanding Christ doth pray for them, it doth not follow but that Believers may fall totally and finally

Argum. 6. *If neither Sin, nor Suffering, can Separate us from the Lord, then nothing can Separate us from him. And that neither Sin nor Suffering can separate us is Evident from the Apostles Words, Rom. 6. 35, 36, 38, 39. Only here let it be Observed, that we Grant*

1. That the Saints of God may fall away from the Degrees of Grace, from a Strong Faith to a Weak Faith, Nay, to some Measure of Hardness of Hearts.

2. We Grant, they may fall from the Comfortable Communion of, the Spirit, Psal. 51. 2, 8, 12.

3. We Grant that Saints may fall from the common Gifts of the Spirit, as in the Case of Saul, &c.

Answer. This Argument hath a Large Latitude, and must in part be deny'd; for sin unrepented of may separate Unfruitfulness, and such like, have a cutting off following them. Therefore upon Examination, we shall find that this will not prove the Assertion. For,

First, I suppose, that it will not be owned that Paul doth intend here denying Christ, or any sin unrepented of; for they may separate: If we suffer

Mat 10. 33. we shall also reign with him, if we deny him, he will
2 Tim. 2. 12. also deny us: Yea, we. I Paul and thou Timothy, if we deny him, he will also deny us, for so he himself said, But whosoever shall deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.

Again,

Again, the *Apostle* doth not say, that Sin shall *Rom. 7.39.*
not separate; and therefore the *Argument* is stretch-
 ed beyond what the *Text* will prove. I rather
 think the 33. *ver.* had been more pertinent to
 the *Business*; where the *Apostle* makes this Holy
 Challenge, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of*
God's Elect? &c. Now to know who are the *E-*
lect of God, will be the *Solution* of this matter.
 (for which I refer you to my Answer to the first
 Argument) Those that are called according to
 God's purpose, *ver. 28.* who they are, see my
 Answer to the third Argument: They that make
 their Calling and Election sure, by adding to
 their Faith, Virtue, &c. *who shall lay any thing to*
their charge, it is God that justifies? &c.

Again, *Who shall separate them that so do?* *Joh. 12. 28*
 Nothing, nor any man can: no nor none of these
 things, *viz.* Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecuti-
 on, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword;
 nay, in all these things, they are more than Con-
 querors, through him that loved them: But this doth
 not prove, but that Persons in Christ may fall,
 and be separated from Christ, by denying Christ,
 although none of these can, if they be not over-
 come by them, to forsake and deny him, &c.

Now the question is, *Whether persons in Christ*
may not be overcome by these?

I Answer, the Scripture saith they may; for if *2 Pet. 2. 20*
 after they have escaped the Pollutions of the
 World, through the Knowledge of our Lord and
 Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled
 therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse than *Gal. 5. 2.*
 the beginning. Therefore Paul exhorteth the *Gal-*
atians, to stand fast in the Liberty wherewith
 Christ hath made them free, and not to be in-
 tangled again in the Yoke of Bondage. Christ saith, *Rev. 17.*
He that overcometh and keeps my words to the end, to
him will I give power over the Nations. He that
overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white rai-
ment. *Ch. 3. 18.*
Ch. 21. 7.
Ch. 2. 10.

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ment: To him that overcomes, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne. He that overcometh, shall inherit all things; I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. God will not disown us because of Persecution, &c. but will Reward us for our Sufferings, if we are not Overcome by them, Be thou Faithful unto the Death, and I will Give thee a Crown of Life. So much for this Argument: now to the next.

Argum. 7. The seventh Argument is taken from Joh. 10. 28. My Sheep hear my Voice, &c. None are able to pluck the Sheep of Christ out of the hands of Christ: therefore they cannot fall totally nor finally.

Ans. This Argument being the same, or of the like import with the sixth, I shall say little to it, for if nothing can separate them, then none can pluck them out of his hands.

Only this, My Sheep (saith Christ.) hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me. such we grant cannot be plucked out of the hands of Christ, that hear his Voice, and follow him, and he gives them Eternal Life, and they shall never Perish if they be [ever] Followers of that which is good, and follow the Lamb Wheresoever he goes.

2 Thel. 3.

15.

Rev. 14. 4.

No Man, as the Text saith, can pluck them out of Christ's hands: but the Question is, whether Christ's Sheep may not refuse to hear Christ's Voice? The time shall come, saith St. Paul, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves Teachers having itching Ears: Therefore it doth not follow but those that are the Sheep of Christ, may cease to be his Sheep, by refusing to hear his Voice, and by not following of him; and so as unfruitful Branches, be cut off from Christ. So much as to that: Now to the next.

Argum. 8.

Because in the Greatest Temptation, the Lord is pleased to give such Assistance, that they shall not be Tempted above their Abilities, 1 Cor. 10. 13. Therefore, &c.

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The *Apostle*, in the beginning of the Chapter, Answ.
 sets the *Corinthians* in mind of *Mercies* that were
 Enjoyed by the *Jews*, from the first ver. to the fifth :
 But saith he, with many of them God was not well
 pleased; for they were overthrown in the *Wilderness*.
 Now these things were our *Examples*, to the intent we 1 Cor. 10.
 should not lust after evil things, as they lusted, &c.
 Pray consider, was their Overthrow set as an En-
 sample to us, and cannot we Lust? Cannot we
 be *Idolators*, *Tempt Christ*, *Murmur* as they did,
 and so be Overthrown as they were? Yea, sure, it
 is possible; For so the *Apostle* telleth the *Hebrews*,
 likewise: let us therefore fear, least a *Promise* be-
 ing left us of entering into his Rest, any of us Heb. 4. 11.
 should seem to come short of it. Let us labour there-
 fore to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after
 the same Example of unbelief, seeing that it is very
 possible we may lust, and be overthrown as they
 were; for all these things hapned unto them for En-
 samples, and they are written for our admonition, up-
 on whom the ends of the World are come: Wherefore,
 saith he, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed
 lest he fall. You that think you stand, so as it is
 impossible you should fall, Take heed, be not too
 high minded, but fear: for if God spared not the
 natural branches; take heed lest he spare not you.

Now lest they should complain that their
Temptations were great, and so, if they did fall,
 they were something *Excusable*; he tells them,
 that there hath no Temptation taken them, but such
 as was common to Man; and therefore they must
 look to it: And besides, God is faithful, who will
 not suffer you to be Tempted, above what you are able
 to bear: but will with the Temptation also make away
 to escape, that you may be able to bear it.
 Wherefore, (seeing it is so) my dearly beloved, flee
 from *Idolatry*: For if you do not, God will over-
 throw you, as he did them.

This may you see that this Text is far from proving that *Saints cannot fall*: but doth plainly prove they may. Now to the *Argument*.

The *Consequence* drawn from the *Reason*, must needs be denied, to be naturally deducted; for *Saints must make use of the Means; viz. the Way* that God will make for them to *Escape*, or else the *Means* will not profit; for the *Tempter*, and his *Temptations*, must be resisted, with *steadfast Faith*. Resist the *Devil*, and he will flee from you: Therefore, *Blessed are ye, when ye endure Temptation*. Men must resist by *Faith*, and endure *Temptation* with *Patience*, or else they may be overcome. Thus is this *Argument* sound too light also. Now to the next.

Argum. 9. The Ninth *Argument* is taken from the present Joy that *Saints have in believing*; which they could never have, if they were not assured to persevere for the future, as well as of their standing for the present. Therefore, &c.

The affirmative part of this *Argument* is denied, viz. They could have no joy, if they were not assured to persevere for the future, as well as of their standing for the present; for *Saints ought to rejoyce in the Lord*, yet it is a *Duty to fear*, and not to boast, as he that putteth off his *Armour*. They are assured to stand, if they give diligence to make their calling and election sure: In so doing they have assurance, and no other ways, in which they may rejoyce: receiving the end of their Faith, the *Salvation of their Souls*. What, no joy for the present? No consolation in *Christ*? No comfort of the *Spirit*? What, because we must hold out to the End, or else lose our *Crown*? Yea, there is much joy in this, that if in patient continuance in well doing, we seek for glory, honour, immortality we shall have eternal life. Persons may have joy for the present, and yet that not hinder, but that they may have no Assurance to stand for the future, but by taking heed.

beed &c. Therefore this Argument is too light to prove the Affirmation. But to proceed.

Present keeping from falling, with presentment of Argument unspottedness, at the coming of Jesus Christ, goeth together. Therefore, &c.

First, Let us examine the Text. Second'y, The Answer.

Saith the Text, Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy. What! Doth this prove, that present keeping from falling, with presentment of unspottedness goeth together? No sure: There is not such a Conclusion to be drawn from the Text. But this it proves, (which we do not deny) That God is able to keep them that will be kept by him; and that he is able to present those that will be kept by him, faultless before Col. 1. 22 his Glory: I say, that will be kept by him; for some²³ will not, as hath been shewn. The Argument, therefore, must be denyed, all of it being too light, and not true: He will present us unspotted, in the Presence of his Glory, if we continue in the Faith, and not else. So much to this Argument. To the next.

The Eleventh Argument is taken from these Argument words, Because in the greatest Afflictions that falls, the Lord is pleased to put under his hands that the Saints cannot fall to Destruction. Psal. 37. 24. 52. 8. Job. 17. 9.

I grant that the Lord doth set to his hand to this End, that They, viz. Believers might not fall to destruction: But, that he setteth to his hand so that they cannot fall to destruction, I deny. Answer.

Let us consider, what is to be understood by the Lord's Hand. For the more clear understanding of this Argument, (although the Text alledged doth not mention it,) by the Lord's Hand is understood the Lord's Power: When Moses doubted in

himself how so many Thousand Mouths should be fed in the Wilderness, the Lord's answer, is, *Is the Lord's hand waxed short?* As if he should say, *Is my power lessened?* Thou shalt see now whether my Word shall come to pass unto thee or not. Now consider, the Lord's Hand being his Power, whether he doth not set to his hand to those that do fall, to this End, that they might not fall to Destruction, see *Jer. 2. 5. 3, 12, 13, 14.* compared with *Rom. 10. 20. 1.*

Again, we have shewed what God's power is, by which he keeps men to Salvation through Faith, in the Answer to the second Argument, to which I refer you for a more full answer to this. The
1 Pet. 1. 5. Power of God (as hath been shewed) by which he keepeth Men, or his Hand, he sets to Believers, to the End they might not fall to Destruction, is his Word; which is the powerful means that he useth to that End: In which means he is not wanting to any that do fall; for the reason of their fall is not because the Lord is wanting in the means, but because they reject his Word.

Jer. 17.
Zech. 7. 11.

Thus is this Argument, also, found too light. Now to the next.

Argument The Twelfth Argument is taken from these words, *The path of Just Men is still increasing, and growing, therefore they cannot totally, nor finally fall away,* *Psal. 1. &c.*

Answer. Men that are just, and so continue, are like unto a Tree that is planted by the Rivers of Waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: And they that do so, I grant, cannot fall totally, and finally: But, what is this to prove the Assertion? Doth it therefore follow, that just Men cannot become unjust, by their forgetting they were once purged from their old Sins, and so become unfruitful Men, that are blind, and cannot see; but Men that have

2 Pet. 1. 9.

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have their delight in the Law of the Lord, and in it do meditate day and night, will be fruitful: This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein; for then, if thou so doest, thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success: But if otherwise see *Isa.* 1. 19, 20. Psal. 1. 2, 3.
Jof. 1. 8.
Jer. 17. 8.

Thus is this Argument weighed in the ballance also, and found too light.

The Thirteenth Argument is stated upon these words, *The Gifts and Callings of God being without Repentance*, *Rom.* 11. 29. therefore they cannot totally nor finally fall, *John* 5. 24. 1 *John* 2. 19. 2 *John* 2. 7. Argu. 13.

The Proposition I grant, viz. The Gifts and Callings of God are without Repentance. But doth this prove, that Believers cannot fall totally, nor finally? No, the Apostle brings it for another End, viz. To prove that God will perform his Covenant with Israel. Answer.

But lest this should not do it, you alledge three places of Scripture to prove your Conclusion: I shall therefore examine them in order, and see whether they are of that weight as to prove what they are brought for. The first place is *John* 5. 34. The Words are these, *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life.* But this doth not prove that Believers cannot fall. It is true they that believe shall not come into condemnation, if they continue believing, for so Christ is to be understood, which as I suppose will not be denied. Rom. 11.
26, 27, 28,
29.

But

Objection. But it may be objected, *They shall continue, because Christ saith they shall not come into Condemnation.*

Answer. They that do continue believing, shall not come into Condemnation, I grant: But that this proves an impossibility to do otherwise, I deny; for we find that some that believed, did not continue: As saith the Evangelist, *From that time many of his Disciples went back and walked no more with him.* Here we may see some that were Christ's Disciples, and thereby under the promise of Everlasting Life, yet shall come into Condemnation; because they do not continue: *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* believed, and thereby were under the Promise, yet they made Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, and so come under Condemnation; for they were delivered to Satan that they might learn not to Blaspheme. Some are already turned aside after Satan, this thou knowest that all they that are in Asia be turned away from me, of whom is *Phyletus* and *Hermogenes*; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the Resurrection is past already, and overthrow the Faith of some, viz. *Hymeneus* and *Phyletus*, but they that do believe, and do continue according to the Text, shall not come into Condemnation.

Your Second place is, *1 Joh. 2. 19.* the words are these, *They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out from us that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*

And doth this Text prove that Believers cannot fall away? Or doth it not prove, that some have fallen away? Sure, it rather proves the latter than the former, for they were with them, and they did go out from them.

But it may be Objected, That they never were of them: And therefore, they went out from them, so that they fell not from the Faith, but from a seeming Faith.

I Answer, That they never were of them the Text doth not say; for then, they would never have been with them. Answer.

Again, When they went out from them, they were not of them, and this I grant: But that they never were of them I deny. Those that depart from the Faith, are not of those that keep the Faith. They that go from the Churches, are not of them that continue with the Churches; but they have received another Spirit, viz. the Spirit of Antichrist: And therefore they go out from them that are of the Spirit of Christ: But that they never were of them, is more than the Text will prove. The Apostle telleth them that there are many Antichrists. They, saith he, went out from us, viz. those Antichrists, according to the Apostle. Also of your own selves shall men arise. (Mark well) of your own selves, those were of them, and they shall speak perverse things to draw disciples after them; Thus is this Scripture found not sufficient to prove that which it is brought for.

Your last place alledged, is 2 John 2. The Words are these, For the Truths sake, which abideth in us, and shall be in us for ever.

I Answer, That the Truth will abide with those that do abide in it, I grant, but some do ~~not~~ from 2 Tim. 2. the Truth. Therefore Saints must beware, least ^{18.} being lead away with the error of the Wicked, they fall ^{2 Pet. 3.} from their own steadfastness; but if they abide in the ^{17.} Truth, the Truth shall make them free. So that you ^{Joh. 8. 32.} may see, that if they abide in that Truth, that Truth

Truth will abide with them for ever, and not otherwise: And therefore the *Apostle* exhorts the *Elect Lady*, Look to your Selves, (saith he) that we lose not the things that we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abides in the Doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son. Thus may we plainly see that the Truth abiding with us, is upon condition of our abiding in it. And thus have you these Arguments all weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and found too light to prove the Affirmation.

The Absurdities that do naturally flow from the Doctrine of Impossibility, for Believers to Fall Totally and Finally from Grace.

Argument 1. IF Believers cannot fall away, then there is nouse of Ministers, as Pastors, Elders and Teachers, whose work is to take the oversight of the Flock, to feed them, and to take heed of them. Now this is altogether useless, if they cannot fall away: If they must be fed, it imports that they cannot live without Food, but will starve and die. If they must be Inspected and have Care taken of them, it imports that they may stray, and be drawn away. They must feed the Flock, and take heed of it, because of the Wolves, which are Mortal Enemies to Sheep; now if Sheep cannot be destroyed by Wolves, that is, cannot be seduced, nor drawn away, nor fall, then there is no use of the Shepherd. He may be spared.

Argument 2. If Believers cannot fall away, then as the *Forger* is useless, so is his Food also. I mean, the growing Word, and Gospel Ordinances, and Duties: As breaking of Bread, Church Assembling, and Communion,

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tion, which we are commanded not to forsake, but
 to desire after, as new born Babes desire the sincere
 milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby. Now
 if Believers cannot Fall, what need is there of Feed-
 ing? Or what use can we make of it? What
 serves it for? Establish us it cannot; for we can-
 not fall, we are established from the Beginning.
 Die we cannot, What use of Food? Overcome
 we cannot be, What use of strengthening? Thus
 then may we say, *In vain have we served God.* And
 What profit is it that we have kept his Ordina-
 nances, and that we have walked mournfully before the
 Lord of Hosts, if Believers cannot fall away?

If Believers cannot fall away, then is a great part Aburd. 1.
of the Scripture useless unto them: As Take heed,
Standfast, Beware, and such like sayings? which
are very plentiful in the Scriptures: And so like-
wise the many Exhortations used by Christ and his
Apostles to Watchfulness, to Sobriety, to Prayer,
to Stability, Which are very plentiful in the
Scripture. Of what use are these and such like places
to us? For why should we take heed, watch beware,
take care to stand fast in the Faith? What do they
serve for, if we cannot fall? Why do we read
them? What do they teach us? Must we take heed
and beware, and no Danger near us, nor can come to
us? Must we watch, and no Enemy to approach us?
Must we arm our selves, when none can overcome
us? If it be Impossible to fall, there is no need of
all this; these Duties are out of date. It is enough
for them to do these things that may Fall; but as
for those that cannot, they are useless unto them.

If Believers cannot Fall away, then it is the ex-
press Saying of the Spirit contradicted: Which saith,
In the latter days some shall depart From the Faith.

Absurd. 5. If Believers cannot fall away, it opens a Door to Lukewarmness, to Phrophaneſs, to neglect of Duties as of Hearing, Reading, Praying, cloſe walking, Watchfulneſs, Fruitfulneſs and the like: For if Believers cannot Fall, why ſhould any of theſe things be done? For ſuch as cannot poſſibly fall, need not pray, hear. Need not read, nor watch, &c. nor do any of theſe things; they are ſure to ſtand: Sin cannot ſeparate them, nor any thing elſe, let them do what they will: Delight in the Law of God, or not Delight in it, all is caſe alike, if it be true that Believers cannot Fall away.

Absurd. 6. It hardens and encourages looſe Profeſſors, in their diſorderly walking in the Profeſſion of the Goſpel; for if they that once believed cannot fall away, they will be hardened, and encouraged to go on. Why ſay they, Once in Chriſt and ever in Chriſt: It is impoſſible that I, which once believed, ſhould fall away. Let me do what I will, nothing can ſeparate me from Chriſt: God is not bound to Ordinances, nor to this way, or that way: He will keep me altho' I do not walk ſo ſtrictly as I have done, or as others do, and therefore what need I care for Church Fellowship, or Hearing, or any of theſe things? Thus may looſe Profeſſors be encouraged.

Absurd. 7. Again, It hardeneth, diſorderly Walkers againſt reprehension, and the admonitions of their Rulers and their Brethren: And hardens them againſt the Danger laid before them for their ſo doing. And the Judgments and Severity of God againſt them that ſo do: For if Believers cannot fall from Grace, then may they ſlight Reprehenſions, and ſay, Take no care for me, I ſhall never fall totally, and finally; therefore tell not me of Danger. I know none there is: I ſee no Severity in God againſt me, for my ſins are pardon'd and ſhall

Rom. 11.
21.

shall never be laid to my charge : God will not enter into Judgment with me, say you what you will. Thus may disorderly Persons be hardned against Reprehensions. If Believers fall from Grace.

It hardeneth them also against Church Censures *Aburd. 8.* that are passed upon them for their Impenitency ; for they will say, What need we matter your Censures ? Though you Excommunicate us and cast us out from you, yet we know God will not ; for he will not forsake us. We shall not be separated from him ; for nothing can do that. Thus doth this Doctrine of Impossibility of falling from Grace harden Impenitent Sinners against Church Censures, which are ratified in Heaven, by Christ *Math. 18. 18.* himself.

It gives Satan an Advantage against Believers ; *Aburd. 9.* for when he Tempts them to sin, he can back it with this Encouragement, viz. It is impossible to fall. With this Pretence he deceived Eve. *Gen. 3. 4. 5.*

It rendereth Believers incapable of withstanding *Aburd. 10.* Satan in his Temptations ; for, Who is more incapable of withstanding a potent Enemy, than he that supposes himself to be secure, and that he cannot be prevailed against ? His Enemy then will take him at unawares, and overcome him : So they that suppose that they cannot fall, may grow secure, and so incapable of withstanding Satan when he assaules them at unawares, and by that means may be overcome immediately by him.

It renders them incapable of suffering Persecution *Aburd. 11.* likewise for the Name of Christ ; for why should they suffer Reproaches, Imprisonments, or any such thing, seeing nothing can separate them from Christ ? No not sin, (as is affirmed.) What if I should

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should (may some say) Conform a little to Men, and so keep my self out of Trouble? I shall not be separated from Christ: For it is impossible that I who have once believed, should fall away. Thus may Satan get in a little at first, and so by degrees take full Possession.

Absurd. 12. It is a Lett to Fruitfulness; for if Believers cannot fall from Grace, What need they endeavour after Fruitfulness or good Works? The rich Man may say, I will keep my money. What need I be so rich in good Works? I know I cannot fall away. Nothing
 1 Tim. 6. can separate me from Christ. Thus may it obstruct
 17. Fruitfulness.

It opens a Door to all Licentiousness: for if Believers cannot fall away, What Loosness is it they may not run into? What need they Watch, Pray, Hear, or do any thing? Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die: What does it signifie, to follow

Absurd. 14. Peace and Holiness? What matters abstaining from Fleshly Lust, or Cleansing our selves from filthiness of Flesh and Spirit? We cannot fall. Nothing can separate us from Christ. No not Sin, being once in Christ; if this Doctrine of Impossibility of Falling from Grace be true.

Thus it may be easily seen that this Doctrine which is so contended for, with so much pretended strength, is not Gods holy Mind; but an Opinion taken up, and endeavoured to be maintained, but cannot, by Gods Word. Let it therefore be weighed in the Ballance, and it will be found too light.

Rom. 11. How it can be cleared from these Absurdities
 12. laid down, I know not, which are very dangerous,
 Phil. 2. 12. and indeed, what will destroy and dissolve the
 Heb. 10. very Life of a Christian's Warfare, and Pilgrimage;
 36. which all that will go to Bliss must pass through
 1 Pet. 5. 8. with Fear and Trembling, with stedfast Faith,
 Heb 3. 12. with Patience, with Watchfulness, with Sobriety,
 Col. 2. 8. with

with taking heed, with being aware of Men, of *Acts* 20. False Prophets, Seducers, little Foxes, Wolves in *29.* Sheeps Cloathing, grievous Wolves, perverse Speakers, False Teachers, and such like; for sure we are fallen into the perillous times, When Men shall be lovers of themselves more than lovers of God. Therefore we have need to take to us the whole Armour of God that we may be able to withstand in the Evil Day, and having done all to stand.

Now these Arguments being Answered, and the Absurdities of that Doctrine shewn, it remains for me to betake my self to my Proposition, as it was stated by me: But denied by the other at our Conference.

Thirteen Reasons by which its plainly proved, that Believers in Christ may fall from Grace.

MY First Reason is, Because they are Command-Reason 1: ed to Take Heed.

The Apostles of Christ were truly Believing Men, and yet, our Lord saith unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you; and the reason is, because many False Christs shall come in his name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. Therefore take you heed, that no Man deceive you: Take *Mat. 24 4.* ye Heed, Watch, and Pray; for ye know not *Mark 13.* when the time is: Take heed to your selves, lest *5. 33.* at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeit- *Luke 21. 34.* ing, and Drunkenness, and Cares of this Life, and so that Day come upon you unawares. These Sayings do plainly Teach us, that they might be Deceived, by False Christs, and be overcome by Suffering, if they did not take heed unto themselves: Or else such Exhortations were needless. For if they could not be Deceived and so Fall, they had no need to take heed. Where there is no Danger, there

Mat. 5. 13.

Luke 14.

34. 35.

there needs no Caution: These Scriptures with many others of like Import, may be crossed out of our Bibles, if there be no Danger of Falling from the Faith. Christ tells his Disciples, that they are the Salt of the Earth; but if the Salt have lost its Savour, wherewith shall it be Salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of Men. Now were it not an Absolute Contradicting of Christ, to say, We cannot lose our Savour, its impossible we should. And a making of his Words Impertinent, and his Cautions useless?

Heb. 3. 12, 13.

Acts 20.

28, 29, 30.

Again, the Apostle gives the like Cautions to the Churches, Take heed Brethren, lest there be in any of you an Evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God: But Exhort one another Daily, while its called to Day, lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of Sin. They must take Heed, or else there may be in them an Evil Heart of Unbelief in Departing from the Living God; and therefore they must exhort one another, lest they be Hardened, &c. Looking diligently, lest any Man fail of the Grace of God; lest any Root of Bitterness spring up, and trouble you: And thereby many be Defiled. Lest there should be any Fornicators, or Prophane Persons, as Esau, who for one Morsel of Meat, sold his Birth-rights. It seems Saints may Fall from Grace, and become Prophane Persons, sell their Birth-rights, &c. Therefore Believers in Christ may Fall away.

Hebr. 12. 15, 16.

Reason. 2.

The Second Reason is, Because the Scripture foretelleth. That many shall be Deceived, and drawn away by Men, speaking perverse things, and made Merchandise of by False Teachers; even those that have obtained like Precious Faith. And therefore, saith he unto them, beware lest also ye being led away by the Error of the Wicked, Fall from your own Steadfastness. Again,

Mat. 24. 5.

Acts 20.

29, 30.

Beware

Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ, let no Man Beguile you, &c. And again, Behold, I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast, let no Man take thy Crown: All which Teacheth us, that Believers may Fall away, if they do not take heed, and that the Spirit did fore-see, that some should Fall, through their not taking heed; Therefore Believers in Christ may Fall away.

The Third Reason is, *Because some have fallen a-Reason 3.*
way from the Faith. St. Paul Exhorts Timothy to 1 Tim. 1.
War a good Warfare, holding Faith and a good Con- 18,
science, which some having put away, concerning Faith, 19,
have made Shipwrack, of whom is Hymeneus and 20.
Alexander.

But some may say, *The Faith which they fell from, Obj.*
was not a true Faith, but a seeming Faith.

I Answer, If that were so, St. Paul did Hymeneus and Alexander great wrong; for he Delivered them to Satan. Now if they did but seem to have Faith; but had it not, they were better when they Fell than when they Stood; because, when they Stood, they seemed to be what they were not, but when they Fell, they appeared to be what indeed they were. And if St. Paul Delivered them to Satan for Falling from a Seeming Faith, he surely did them wrong, for then they were delivered to Satan, for dealing plainly, which they did when they Fell, but were Dissemblers when they Stood, if they had but a Seeming Faith, which is none at all. And how they could make Shipwrack of that which they never had, is a Paradox to me.

But, it was a true Faith, and no Seeming Faith, which they made Shipwrack of: And the Apostle

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Exhorts Timothy to hold the same Faith, and a good Conscience, which some have put away, &c. So that the same Faith, the one must hold that the other put away: Which if the same, it must needs be a True, and therefore no Seeming Faith.

Again, They that Fall from the Faith, are said to Depart from the Living God: Now it is contrary to all Reason, to say, they Depart from him who never were with him: And that which brings Persons to God, can be no Seeming Faith, but a True Faith; and therefore that Faith which is fallen from, in Departing from the Living God, must be a True Faith.

Hebr, 10,
12,

Again, That Faith which is accompanied with a Good Conscience is a True Faith.

But the Faith which Hymeneus and Alexander made Shipwrack of, was accompanied with a Good Conscience (holding Faith and a Good Conscience which some having put away,)

Therefore that Faith which they put away was a True Faith.

Reason 4. The Fourth Reason is, Because we are Commanded, not to be High minded, but to Fear. For (saith the Spirit,) because of Unbelief. They were broke off; and you stand by Faith. Be not High Minded but Fear. And the Reason is, Because, If God spared not the natural Branches, take heed lest he spare not you. We must Fear. Why, what is the matter? What need we Fear, if we cannot Fall? What need we Take Heed if there be no Danger? But there is Need, and therefore Danger; for we stand by Faith. And if we let go our Faith,

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as we may, we let go all. God will spare us no more than he did the natural Branches. *Let us Labour therefore to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief.* Therefore Believers in Christ may fall away. Heb. 4. 11.

The Fifth Reason is, *Because the Spirit saith expressly, that in the Latter Days some shall Depart from the Faith, giving heed to Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils; speaking Lies in Hypocrisie, having their Conscience seared with a Hot Iron.* Therefore Believers in Christ may Fall away. Reason 5.
1 Tim. 4.
1, 2.
2 Thes. 2.
3.

The Sixth Reason is, *Because Perseverance hath the Promise of the Crown, as a Condition of it.* Reason 6.

Now if Believers cannot Fall, Perseverance cannot be a Condition of Happiness; because that which is a Condition by which we Obtain the Thing Promised, or do not Obtain it, may be done or not done: And that it is a Condition, is plain in Scripture. *Be thou Faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life. To him that Overcomes will I give to Eat of the Hidden Manna, and will give him a White Stone, and in the Stone a New Name Written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.* Rev. 2. 10.
17.

And he that Overcometh and keeps my Works unto the End, to him will I give Power over the Nations. And he shall Rule them with a Rod of Iron; as the Vessels of a Potter shall they be broken to Shivers even as I Received of my Father. And I will give him the Morning Star. Rev. 2. 26,
27, 28.

Again further, It is a Condition of Happiness; as the Scripture fully proves. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence Steadfast to the End. Christ will present us Holy, Unblamable and Unreproveable, if we Continue in the Faith. Behold (saith the Apostle Paul) therefore the Goodness and Severity of God. Heb. 3. 14.
Rom. 8. 1.
12.

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them which fell, Severity; but towards thee, Goodness, if thou continue in his Goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. (Mark well,) It is on Condition of Continuance. It is if we continue; or otherwise, we also shall be cut off. God will be as severe to us, if we continue not, as he was to them, viz. Israel, who fell from him: Therefore Believers in Christ may fall away.

Reason. 7. The Seventh Reason is, *Because the Lord threatneth sore Punishment in case of Non-continuance.*

Which if there were no such thing as *Falling from Grace*, How could *Punishment* be threatned? Where there can be no *Offence*, there can be no *Punishment*; because *Punishments* are threatned where there are *Offences* committed, or at least where they may be. That *Punishments* are threatned, in this Case, see what the Apostle says. For
 Heb. 10. if we sin wilfully after that we have received the
 26, 27. Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.

Again, St. Peter saith, That the latter End (of Men That are entangled and overcome of the World again, that have once escaped, through the Knowledge of Jesus Christ) is worse with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them. Now if there were no possibility of coming to a worse Estate, by falling from the Commandments, and by being overcome, then would these Words of the Apostle be of no Use at all. Therefore Believers in Christ may fall, and become Culpable of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, and come into a worse Estate than ever they would have been in, had they never known him.

The

The Eighth Reason is, Because the Lord complains Reason 8.
of his People, for forsaking him, the Fountain of Living Waters. Jer. 2. 13.

Now God takes up this Complaint, because the Thing was Matter of Fact. And shall we say, There is no such thing as a falling away, when God says there is, and complains of it? God forbid: Yea, let God be true, but every Man a Liar. And from hence (in as much as God himself hath said it) Believers in Christ may fall away.

The Ninth Reason is, Because Trees may die that Reason 9.
bad Life; i. e. Men that were quickened by the Lord, Eph. 2. 1, & may become dead by turning the Grace of God into Wantonness, or Lasciviousness.

Of these St. Peter and St. Jude speak. These are Jude 12.
spots in your Feasts of Charity, when they feast with 2 Pet. 2.
you, feeding themselves without fear: Clouds they are
without Water, carried about of Winds; Trees whose
Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked
up by the Roots. These were twice dead, and therefore
twice alive; for it cannot be said that any Inanimate Thing can die. These, therefore, were
dead in Sins, and made alive in Christ, and died
again. Twice dead, and so fall totally and finally;
for they are plucked up by the Roots. And we know,
when Trees are plucked up by the Roots, they die, Heb. 6. 7. &
and cannot have Life in them again; but are fit
for Burning. Therefore Believers in Christ may
fall away.

The Tenth Reason is, Because Branches in the Reason 10.
Vine may be taken away. i. e. Men united to Christ, Joh. 15. 2,
as the Branches are to the Vine, may be taken away 9, 10.
or disunited; because they die, or bear no Fruit.

I am the Vine (saith Christ) and my Father is the
Husbandman, every Branch in me that beareth not
Fruit, he taketh away: Therefore saith he, conti-

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nue in my Love, and lest they should not know how, he saith, *If ye keep my Commandments ye shall abide in my Love, even as I have kept my Father's Commandments and abide in his Love: Therefore Believers in Christ may fall away, be cut off, die, and bear no Fruit, &c.*

Reason 11. The Eleventh Reason is, *Because they that have obtained like precious Faith, must give diligence to make their Calling and Election sure.*

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Whereby it plainly appears that *Believers*, yea, those who have Precious Faith may fall, and that their *Calling* and *Election* is not certainly fixed, and finally determined: For if it were, what need the Apostle give them a Caution to *make it sure*? Wherefore it is certain still, that *Believers in Christ may fall away.*

Reason 12. The Twelfth Reason is, *Because Believers, chosen Persons, are exhorted to put on the whole Armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil.*

We know when Men arm themselves, it is because of some Enemy; yea, and such an Enemy as may overcome them, slay them, spoil them, vanquish them, &c. Therefore they must stand fast, quit themselves like Men, be strong. Now if Believers cannot fall from the Faith, nor be overcome, they have no need of Armour. If the Devil's Wiles cannot prevail, they need not arm themselves; but they must take to them the whole Armour of God: Therefore *Believers in Christ may fall away.*

Reason 13. The Thirteenth Reason is, *Because Men that have their Names written in the Book of Life, and their part in the holy City, which none but Believers have, may by Transgression have their Names blotted out, and their part taken away out of the City.*

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For saith St. *John* I testifie unto every Man that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any Man shall add unto these Things, God shall add the Plagues that are written in this Book; and if any Man shall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecie, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the Things that are written in this Book. Thus Men whose Names are written in the Book of Life, may have them blotted out. And those who sin wilfully may, nay, shall have their Part taken out of the Holy City. But for those that overcome, Christ will not blot their Names out of the Book of Life; but will confess them before his Father, and before his Angels. Therefore *Believers* may fall away. Rev. 22. 18, 19.

I leave these Reasons to the serious and unbiassed Reader, to weigh in the Ballance of the Sanctuary; and shall now come to shew the Use and Profit of this *Doctrine of Perseverance*; or the Possibility that *Saints stand in, to be deceived*, and so fall, if they do not take heed, and use the Means, strive and labour after the obtaining the Crown, which they cannot have, if they do not fight the good Fight and finish their Course, and keep the Faith to the End, as saith the Spirit. Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee the Crown of Life, which the Lord will give unto all them that so do, and that love his appearing. Rev. 2. 10

The profitable Uses that flow from this Doctrine, viz. That 'tis possible for the Saints to fall finally, if they take not heed.

IT Teacheth the Saints to be watchful over themselves, their Words, Thoughts and Actions, Hse 1. 1. Mat. 25. 13. 33.

Mat. 26. Actions, lest they should be overtaken. This
 41. Duty is much urged in Scripture. Watch therefore,
 1 Cor. 16. for you know not the Day, nor the Hour, wherein
 13. the Son of Man cometh: Watch and Pray that you
 1 Thes. 5, fall not into Temptation: Watch ye, stand fast in
 6. the Faith, be strong: Therefore let us not sleep as do
 2 Tim. 4. others, but watch and be sober. So Paul exhorteth
 5. Timothy: But watch thou, in all things endure
 Rev. 16. Affliction. In this Duty were the Saints much ex-
 15. ercised. The Prophet Habaccuc saith, I will stand
 Hab. 6. 2. upon my watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will
 watch, to see what he will say unto me, and what I
 shall answer, when I am reprov'd. So was that
 Gracious Soul the Prophet David exercised, when
 Psal. 130, he said, My Soul waiteth for the Lord, more than
 6. they that watch for the Morning. There is a
 Blessedness annexed to this Duty of Watchful-
 ness. The Watchful Souls are reckoned amongst
 the blessed ones that shall inherit the Earth:
 Behold, I come as a Thief, blessed is he that watch-
 eth, and keepeth his Garments, lest he walk naked,
 and they see his shame. But in the neglect of this
 Duty, there may be great Loss. Be watchful,
 and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready
 to die, &c. If therefore thou wilt not watch, I
 will come on thee as a Thief, and thou shalt not
 know what Hour I will come upon thee: By this
 we may see how necessary this Duty is, and like-
 wise, how it flows from the aforesaid Doctrine,
 as a Stream from the Fountain; for we must
 watch, because we have an Adversary that seeks
 1 Pet. 5. 8. to devour us: Be sober, be vigilant, because your
 Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh
 about, seeking whom he may devour.

Let's consider, what need the Servants of Christ
 have to watch, to take heed, and to beware;
 their Enemies are many, and great: As the De-
 vil, a potent Adversary, and his Baits very
 Mat. 4. 9. Deceiving. As the World and the Pleasures
 thereof. When the Devil tempted Christ,
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our beloved Lord, What was his Bait ? Why the World. *All this will I give thee,* saith he, *if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* Therefore we should Eph. 6: put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able 11, 16. to stand against the Wiles of the Devil. And again, Above all, taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked, seeing Evil Communications corrupt good Manners. 1 Cor. 15. And seeing, likewise, that *Whoso bridleth not his Tongue, his Religion is vain.* Therefore David Jam. 26.1. desired the Lord to set a watch before his Mouth, and to keep the Door of his Lips.

Again, What need have the Servants of Christ to set a Watch over their Thoughts also ? seeing Lust when it is conceived, brings forth Sin, and Sin, when it is finished, brings forth Death. Therefore saith David, *I hate vain Thoughts ; but I love thy Law.* Suffer not thy Thoughts, then, to run after Vanity; thou feest there is Danger in it : But make this good Use (knowing there is Danger) of this Truth. Let it Teach thee to stand upon thy Watch ; as our Lord saith, *What I say unto you,* Mark 13. *I say unto all Men, watch.* 37.

It teacheth us, to Run with Patience the Race that is set before us. Because it is not for a Time, that we must run, or part of the way ; but it must be the whole Race, to the End, till Death, and the like : Therefore the Apostle saith, *Let Patience have her perfect Work ;* we desire that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the End, that ye be not slothful, but Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promise. The many Reproaches, Temptations, Afflictions, Sufferings, Persecutions, Imprisonments, yea and Death it self, which they that will live godly in Christ Jesus are liable to suffer, and to pass through here, for the Testimony of Christ, must be endured with Patience. Thou, therefore, endure Hardness

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- Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ. These Things must be endured, if we will have the Crown, and that to the End too: For it is he that endureth to the End, who shall be saved.
- Mat. 24. 13. And if we faint in our Minds, and cast off our Confidence, and so cast off Christ, because of the Cross, we shall not reap. Let us not be weary of well doing; (saith the Apostle) for in due Season we shall reap if we faint not. If we suffer for Christ with Patience, and endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, as he did, we shall be Glorified with him: But if in our Sufferings we are overcome, and deny him, *he also will deny us; therefore let us consider him that suffered such Contradictions of Sinners, lest we be wearied, and faint in our Minds.* Wherefore also let us take (as the
- Jan. 5. 10. Apostle of our Lord saith) *my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an Example of Suffering, Affliction, and of Patience?* By all which we may see that if we do not add Patience to our Faith, we may faint under our Burden: Wherefore, let us not be weary in well doing, for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
- Use 3. It teaches the Servants of the Lord to walk humbly, knowing that *God resisteth the Proud, but he gives Grace to the Humble.* We must not be high minded, but fear, for this Cause; for he spared not the Natural Branches, therefore take heed, lest he spare not thee: We must learn of Christ to be of a meek and lowly Spirit, put on Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Longsuffering, and be clothed with Humility as with a Garment;
- 1 Pet. 5. 5. Therefore St. Paul, that faithful Servant of the Lord, humbled himself: I, saith he, keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have Preached to others, I myself should be a cast away. God will not dwell with a proud Person, but he will dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble Spirit; he hath shewed thee, O Man,

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what is good, and what the Lord requires of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

It Teaches the Servants of the Lord to give use 4:
diligence to make their Calling and Election sure, and to work out their Salvation with fear and trembling, because otherwise they may become unfruitful and barren, and so be taken away from the Vine; Phil. 2.12: but if they so do, they shall never fall: They Joh. 15.3: must work, and they must work out their Sal- 2 Pet. 1. vation too, with fear and trembling; for to such 10. the Lord hath promised his Presence, Thou meetest Isa. 64. 3: him that rejoiceth and worketh Righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: God doth expect that his People should be a willing People; a People fruitful; a People giving all Diligence, to add to their Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue Know- 2 Pet. 1. 5: ledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Tempe- 6, 7, 8, 9. rance Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly Kindness, and to Brotherly Kindness Charity. Thus doing, ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: But he that lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old Sins.

It Teacheth them to esteem highly of the Mi- use 5:
 nistry of Christ, and so consequently of his Ministers; who are set over them as their Feeders; knowing that without they are fed, they may pine, and so die. This is a Duty that the Lord doth enjoin his People to do. And we be- 1 Thess. 5: seech you, Brethren, to know them which labour 12, 13: among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them very highly in Love, for their Work's sake, &c. This it Teaches Saints to do, and joyfully to receive from them the Food appointed for their Spiritual Nourishment and Growth, and not to slight their profitable Admonitions, which tend to the taking away any Infection that may arise in them; which if not pre:

prevented in time, may grow to a Consumption. And so instead of Thriving under the Ministry, they may Pine and Waste, and at last Die. Not for want of Food; but because of an Infection that may hinder the Digestion, and so the Food become unprofitable unto them. Which may be occasioned by their slighting those that are over them in the Lord, and by slighting their Labour and Admonitions; and therefore the Hebrew Saints were put upon this Duty. *Remember them which have the Rule over you, who have spoke unto you the word of God, whose Faith follow; considering the end of their Conversation.* And again, *Obeys them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief; for that is unprofitable for you, &c.*

Hebr. 13.
17.

Use 6.

It Teacheth the Servants of the Lord to set a High Estimation on the Word of God. They knowing that to be the Sincere Milk by which they must be Fed and Grow. The good Servant of the Lord, the Prophet David, did Highly esteem of the Word of God. Saith he, *Princes have Persecuted me without cause: But my Heart standeth in awe of thy Word. I rejoyce at thy Word, as one that findeth great Spoil.* Also, *Mine Eyes prevent the Night Watches, that I might Meditate in thy Word.* So likewise the Prophet Jeremiah, *thy Words were found, and I did Eat them, and thy Word was unto me the Joy and Rejoycing of my Heart, &c.* To this Duty the Apostle of our Lord doth press Believers. *Wherefore lay apart all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness, and receive them Meekness, and the Ingrafted Word, which is able to Save your Souls. And how Sweet are thy Words unto my Taste!* Saith David. Thus to do, doth this Truth Teach us; Because, *who so Despiseth the Word shall be Destroyed: But he that feareth the Commandments shall be Rewarded;* and again, *wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, because*

119. 103.

Prov. 13.
13.

Isa. 30. 12.
13.

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ye have Despised this Word, and trust in Oppression, Isa. 66. 2:
 and Perverseness, and stay thereon, therefore this In-
 quiry shall be to you as a Breach ready to fall, swelling
 out in a High Wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at
 an Instant, for all those things hath mine Hand made,
 and all those things have been, saith the Lord: But to
 this Man will I look, even to him that is Poor, and of
 a Contrite Spirit, and Trembleth at my Word: The
 Lord is pleased to make Gracious Promises to
 such as highly Esteem of his Word; but if we
 Despise it we shall be Destroyed: O how Precious
 is the Word of the Lord? How should it then be
 Digested, and received into our very Hearts, as
 our Food, as our Councel, as our Light, and
 as our Lanthorn; lest it be Despised; and we
 Starve, and Die, and be Destroyed.

1 Sam. 3. 11

It Teacheth the Servants of Christ to Esteem
 Highly of Gospel Ordinances. The Precious In-
 stitutions of their Precious Lord; because, they
 know that hereby God is pleased to convey him-
 self unto them. And that without their Obedi-
 ence unto, and Faithful Walking in them, they
 are in unspeakable Danger of Falling to Destruc-
 tion. Therefore saith the Apostle John, whosoever
 Transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of
 Christ hath not God, he that abideth in the Doctrine
 of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son: Again
 Christ saith, if ye keep my Commandments, ye
 shall abide in my Love, &c. He that hath my
 Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that
 Loveth me. What a sad Estate, and Condition
 are they in then, that set light by Ordinances of
 Christ, that cast them behind them, and break
 the Commandments of the Lord and Teach Men
 so to do! The Lord Christ will make as little ac-
 count of them one Day; for he saith, Why call
 you me Lord, and do not the things that I say? As if
 Christ should say, you call me Lord, but why do
 you so? How am I your Lord, and you keep not
 my Sayings? If I were your Lord, you would
 keep

1st 7.

John 9:
 John 15:
 14. 21. 24.

Luk. 5. 18.

- keep my Words; you would highly esteem my Ordinances, and the like. How many are there at this Day, that call Christ, Lord, and yet do not Love his Testimonies? How many are there that have owned Christ in his Institutions, and yet have Transgressed, and abide not in his Doctrine? But slight his Ordinances, saying they are Low things: As if they were too high to Submit to them, or having Submitted to them, were grown too High to continue in them. And yet they call him Lord. The Apostle *Paul* Prais'd the *Corinthians* for keeping the Ordinances as he
- 1 Cor. 11. had Delivered them. Let this Use be made therefore of this Truth, seeing if we Transgress and abide not in the Doctrine of Christ, we have not God.
- Use 8. It Teacheth the Servants of the Lord to continue Instant in Prayer, Praying Fervently; because otherwise, they may enter into Temptation, and so be in Danger of being Overcome: Therefore saith Christ, Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into Temptation; and he so Taught his Disciples to Pray, *Lead us not into Temptation.*
- Rom. 12. 12. Again, Take ye heed, Watch, and Pray; for ye know not when the Master cometh. To this
- Mat. 6. 13. Duty, we are Exhorted by the *Apostles* of Christ, to be Instant in Prayer, without ceasing, and to continue in Prayer, and Watch in the same with
- Matth. 24. 42. Thanksgiving. Be ye therefore Sober, Watch unto Prayer. And he spake a Parable unto them, to this End, that Men ought always to Pray, and not to Faint. The good Lord will be sought unto for Strength against Temptations: And Prayer is one of the Weapons with which we must
- 1 Thes. 5. 17. overcome Temptations, and Satan; yea, and prevail with God, through his dear Son, for supplies of Grace, that we may be able to stand
- Eph. 6. 18. against our Enemies in the Day of Tryal and Adversity. Let us therefore Learn this good Lesson,
- Psal. 65. 2. Dan 9. 21. To be Instant in Prayer: For God is a God Hearing

Hearing Prayer, and will Answer while we are yet speaking, and whatsoever we ask in his Sons Joh. 13.7. Name, he will give it unto us, if we abide in him, and his Word abide in us.

It Teacheth the Servants of the Lord to be *use 9.*
Constant in Hearing, and in Reading the Scriptures, and to Meditate in the Law of the Lord. They knowing that it is a means by which they shall be Strengthened, Fed and Refreshed, and without which they may grow Feeble: Therefore, saith the Wisdom of God, *Hearken to me O ye Children, for Blessed are they that keep my Ways: Hear Instruction, and be Wise and Refuse it not, Prov. 8.32, 33, 34. Blessed is the Man that Heareth me, and Watcheth Daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my Doors. Prov. 4. 5. Eccl. 5. 1. A Wise Man will Hear and Increase Learning. Be more ready to Hear, than to give the Sacrifice of Fools; for they consider not that they do Evil. Hear, and your Soul shall Live: Again, be Swift to Hear, and Slow to Speak, Slow to Wrath: Jam. 1. 19 Thus doth this Truth Teach us to hear constantly; yea, so to hear, as to do what the Will of God is: For otherwise we deceive our selves. It is not the Hearer of the Law which is justified, Rom. 2. 13. but the Doer, therefore saith Christ, he that heareth these Sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a Wise Man, &c. But if we Mat. 7. 24. refuse to Hear, God will send a Famine, not a Famine of Bread, nor of Thirst, but of Hearing Luk. 6. 47. the Word of the Lord: How doth it then behove the Servants of Christ, to be Diligent Hearers of the Word, in these Days of Plenty: And to Amos 8. Walk thankfully towards God, in all well pleasing; lest he should Deprive them of so Great, Rich, and Unspeakable a Mercy?*

It Obligeth, and Encourageth, the Servants of *use 10.*
the Lord, to Suffer Persecution Constantly, for the Testimony of Christ; they knowing, that if they Suffer, they shall be Glorified with him: But if they Deny him, he will also Deny them.

Of Falling from Grace.

This is that which the Word of God doth often mind us of, viz. That they must suffer Persecution. Fear none of these things which thou shalt Suffer, behold the Devil shall Cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be Tryed, and ye shall have Tribulation Ten Days. Be thou Faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life. The Lord here gives a Gracious Encouragment, to let his Servants know that they shall be Rewarded with a sufficient Recompence. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more Exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory. What an Encouragment is this to them, not to forsake nor deny Christ, seeing there is a Crown, an Eternal weight of Glory too, for them that are Faithful unto Death, and do not deny him. What would not a Man suffer for a Crown of Glory? For an everlasting Kingdom? Who would not undergo the Light and Momentary Afflictions of this World to come at the Everlasting Happiness of the World to come? And besides, What would it profit any Man to Gain the Whole World, and lose his own Soul? What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? Therefore he that will Save his Life shall Lose it, that is, he that to Save his Life here, will Deny Christ, and not Suffer for his Sake, shall Lose his Life in the World to come. Wherefore nothing will be our Gain, if we do not hold fast; but great will be our Loss, viz. Our Souls, our Lives, a Crown, a Kingdom of Glory. How should the Servants of the Lord, be filling their Hearts, with the Consideration, of the Excellency, and Glory, of that Kingdom, that they may hold fast, that no Man take their Crown, knowing that the Promise is to him that overcometh. It teacheth them to resist Satan stedfastly. They know that he goeth about as a Roaring Lion, seeking whom he may Devour: And that he is an Enemy that must be Resisted; otherwise he may Prevail against them, and Overcome them

Rev. 2. 10.

2 Tim. 2.

12.

1 Cor. 9.

25.

Matth. 16.

26.

Rev. 3. 11.

Cha. 2. 17.

26, 27 28.

Chap. 3. 5.

Cha. 2. 21.

Cha. 2. 1. 7.

4/5 11.

Of Falling from Grace.

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them. This may Teach the Servants of the Lord Eph. 4.27.
to stand upon their Guard, and to Resist every
Temptation, wherewith Satan endeavours to
Surprize them, and narrowly to Watch against
his Suggestions; for they are to give no place to
the Devil, but to Learn with the Apostle, not to
be Ignorant of his Devises; That so having on the
whole Armour of God, they may be able to
Quench his Fiery Darts, by Resisting him with
Stedfast Faith. Seeing, else, they may be Over-
come by him, and Caught in his Snares, like
the silly Bird, who is Caught in the Net.

It Teacheth them to Mortify the Deeds of the 1st 12. 1
Flesh. They knowing, that such things are E-
nemys to them. To which Duty we are Exhort- Col. 3. 5.
ed, *Mortify your Members, that are upon the Earth;*
for if ye Live after the Flesh, ye shall Die, but if ye Rom. 8. 13.
through the Spirit, do Mortify the Deeds of the Body, 1 Cor. 9.
ye shall Live. The Servants of Christ must not 27.
Live after the Flesh; they will then come under 1 Pet. 2. 11.
Condemnation. Therefore the Apostle Paul
kept under his Body, and brought it into Subjec-
tion; and the Reason was, lest he should be a Cast
away. The Flesh, and the Lusts thereof, do make
War against the Soul: And they must not be suf-
fered to be Predominant in the Servants of Christ;
for they are Stout Warriors, and will Slay, if
they be not Destroyed.

It Teacheth the Servants of Christ, to follow 1st 13.
after Peace and Holiness, without which, no
Man shall ever see the Lord. Holiness becoming Hebr. 12.
the House of the Lord for Ever. To this End 14.
was their Redemption wrought, that they should Psal. 93. 5.
serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Luk. 1. 73.
days of their Life: Even so now, yield your
Members Servants to Righteousness unto Ho- Rom. 6.
liness, but now being made free from Sin, and 19. 22.
become Servants to God, ye have your Fruit un- 1 Thel. 4.
to Holiness, and the End Everlasting Life. For 7.
God hath not called us unto Uncleaness, but 1st 6. 3.
unto

- Eph. 6. 13. unto Holiness; for Holiness will bring Peace to the Conscience, Glory to God, Adorn Truth, keep
- Heb. 13. 7. Satan at a Distance, strengthen the things that remain, keep us in the Love of God, and make us appear to be Trees of Righteousness of the Lords
- 1 Pet. 2. 2. Planting, that he might be Glorified, but if we
- Psal. 119. 105. be not Followers after Holiness, we shall never see the Lord in Peace; but rather be of that number
- Eph. 6. 17. that desire the Rocks to fall on them to hide them from the Face of the Lamb; let the Servants of
- 1 Pet. 2. 17. the Most High God, strive to make their Calling and Election sure, and to stand upon their Watch
- Mat. 24. 4. Tower; for they have many Enemies who go about seeking whom they may Devour. What need
- 2 Pet. 2. 1. have they to take to them the whole Armour of God, that they may be able to stand, and having done all to stand? How should they esteem them that are *set over them*, in the Lord: And their *Faith follow*, considering the end of their Conversation? How should they *Esteem the Word*? which is their *Milk*, their *Light*, their *Lanthorn*, their *Sword*, with which they must *Fight*, and *Contend* against all *Oppositions* both of the *Devil*, and *Flesh*, the *World*, *Pleasures*, *Profits*, and *Preferments* thereof. How should they make the Word their *Counsellor* in all their *Actions*, and not dare to presume in any thing above what is *Written*, lest they be overtaken with the *Error of the Wicked* and so *Fall from their own Stedfastness*: How should they be-ware, and *take heed of Men*, of *False Christs*, *False Prophets*, and *False Teachers*, how should they try the *Spirits*, whether they be of God or no, seeing many *False Christs*, and *Prophets* are already risen, which *Deceive* and *Beguile* the Hearts of the Simple. How should they *Meditate* in the Law of the Lord; stand fast in the Faith without *Wavering*, Remember
- 1 Joh. 4. 1. 2. 18. God in his way, Esteem of Christs *Institutions* or *Gospel Ordinances*, they are Gods *Conveyances* in which he doth convey himself unto them: How ought they to Walk *Humbly* with their God, and to endure *Affliction* Patiently, to *Deny* themselves, take up their *Cross* and follow Christ. So an Entrance shall be *Ministred* unto us abundantly into the *Everlasting Kingdom* of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*.